

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
U.S. EMBASSY Tbilisi**

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Funding Opportunity Title:	<i>Democracy Commission Small Grants</i>
Funding Opportunity Number	PAS-TBILISI-FY20-02-DemCom
Deadline for Applications:	03/17/2020
CFDA Number:	19.900
Total Amount Available:	\$450,000

THIS NOTICE IS SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY OF FUNDING.

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

U.S. Embassy Tbilisi announces an open competition for Democracy Commission Small Grants Program (DemCom). The United States initiated in 1994 as a flexible mechanism to enable embassies to support local democratic initiatives in the countries of Central, Eastern Europe, and the post-Soviet States.

The implementing body at each mission is the Democracy Commission, chaired by the Deputy Chief of Mission and including the Public Affairs Officer, other members of the Country Team, and representatives of U.S. Government agencies.

Program Objectives:

The purpose of the Democracy Commission Small Grants Program is to award grants for specific projects that support democracy, enhance the development of democratic institutions and foster education of civil society in Georgia. Grants will be awarded to non-governmental, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and media organizations based and registered in Georgia. **The maximum amount of a grant is \$50,000 per project.**

The project proposals must address at least one of the following themes:

- **Economic Growth** (example: encouraging entrepreneurship, stimulating regional growth through tourism development – mountain tourism, food, and art tourism, eco-tourism);
- **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion** (example: women empowerment, integration of people with disabilities, inclusive education, protecting children's 'rights and welfare);
- **Civic Engagement and More Informed Citizenry** (example: NGO capacity building, enhanced cooperation between government and non-state actors through NGO/CSO/government partnerships, supporting public-private partnerships, media literacy, cybersecurity, youth engagement in Tech camps and cyber education, stimulating critical thinking among youth, enhancement of media schools and teaching of journalism);
- **Conflict Resolution and Tolerance** (for example dialogue and reconciliation of disputes, regional stability, peace education).

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Application Submission: From December 27, 2019, to March 17, 2020

Length of performance period: up to 12 months

A number of awards anticipated: Depending on budget request award amounts.

Award amounts: The maximum amount of a grant is \$50,000 per project.

Type of Funding: FY19/20 Economic Support Funds under the Foreign Assistance Act

Anticipated program start date: September 2020

Funding Instrument Type: Grant

Program Performance Period: Proposed programs should be completed in 12 months or less

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligible Applicants:

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

- Georgian not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations;
- Higher Education Institutions;
- Independent media outlets registered in Georgia.

Other Eligibility Requirements: To be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a unique entity identifier (Data Universal Numbering System/DUNS number from Dun & Bradstreet), as well as a valid registration on www.SAM.gov. Please see Section D.4 for information on how to obtain these registrations.

Cost Sharing or Matching: Cost share is not required.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Address to Request Application Package: Application forms required below are available on the U.S. Embassy [website](#).

Content and Form of Application Submission: Please follow all instructions below carefully. Proposals that do not meet the requirements of this announcement or fail to comply with the stated requirements will be ineligible.

Content of Application

Please ensure:

- The proposal clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity
 - All documents are in English
 - All budgets are in U.S. dollars and excludes VAT.
1. Please e-mail one (1) copy of a completed application in the electronic form to TbilisiGrants@state.gov
 2. Please deliver one (1) copy of the application package to the U.S. Embassy at the following address:

Democracy Commission Small Grants Program

Public Affairs Section

U.S. Embassy

29 US-Georgia Friendship Ave. Didi Digomi

0131, Tbilisi, Georgia

The following documents are **required**:

Application forms required below are available at the U.S. embassy [website](#).

1. Mandatory application forms

SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance – organizations)

SF-424A (*Budget Information for Non-Construction programs*)

SF-424B (*Assurances for Non-Construction programs*)

Application form

The most recent CV of project team leader

Support Letters

2. PROPOSAL (8 pages maximum):

The proposal should contain sufficient information so that anyone not familiar with the program would understand exactly what the applicant wants to achieve and how the program would achieve those goals.

Grant Applicant Details: Name of the organization, address, phone/fax number/e-mail address, name and title of director and other significant staff members, particularly those who will be involved in the project.

Project Name and theme: List which priority theme the project covers. If your project covers more than one, then please list all relevant themes with one-sentence explanation.

Amount Requested: List the exact amount request from Democracy Commission for this project.

Executive Paragraph: In 5-10 sentences describe the project. This paragraph should be very concise without listing project justification.

Project Justification: This is a very important aspect of the proposal and applicants should pay particular attention to it. Why have you decided to do this project? What is the purpose of the project? What is the importance of the project? Why should it be funded? Who will be affected by this project? What difference does it make for your country? Remember that the Democracy Commission will only support those projects that will make an important contribution. Applicants may also attach letters of endorsement attesting to the seriousness of the proposal.

A detailed description of the project and project activities: What does the applicant propose to do? The proposal should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with it would understand exactly what the applicant wants to do and why. The more specific, detailed, and clear the program description, the better.

Project Sustainability: Describe the expected long-term impact of the project. If the project is intended to continue after the funding from the Democracy Commission ends, the proposal must also contain a very thorough explanation of how the organization will fund the activity in the future. If a convincing explanation is not included, this will disqualify the project from consideration for Democracy Commission support.

Background on Applicant and Organization: When was the organization founded, what are its principal activities, significant achievements, etc.? A copy of the registration papers of the

organization as issued by host country authorities should be attached. Applicants should also attach a CV, resume or personal history not exceeding one page.

Previous U.S. Government Funding: Please list all previous U.S. Government funding which will include previous Democracy Commission grants as well as USAID or NED funded projects. Please list year, amount of project and name of the project.

3. **Budget Justification Narrative:** After filling out the SF-424A Budget (above), use a separate sheet of paper to describe each of the budget expenses in detail.

In order to be sure that the Commission understands why there is a need for money, the applicant should prepare a line-by-line list of expenses that will be generated by this project. The budget should be prepared in a logical manner and offer enough detail that a reviewer will be able to understand exactly what the figures mean and how that figure was determined.

The budget narrative should follow the actual budget presentation itself and describe in some detail the costs presented in the budget. In other words, the narrative explains, line by line, what the numbers mean and how they were determined. (For example, Travel: \$3,000. Explanation: Two-day conference in (location) for 30 participants with a 2 x \$50 travel grant to each participant for room, board, and transportation costs.)

Program expenses should cover all costs for the project activities. They may include all honoraria to specialists or associates; travel/per diem/lodging expenses for trips; and all expenses for seminars or conferences (speakers' fee, preparation of materials and room rental).

Fees are paid to the people who will spend the majority of their time on the project and have signed contracts. The fees should be calculated on the total number of hours worked for the duration of the project. Fee levels should be reasonable and no higher than other local salaries and should include all local taxes.

Administrative expenses include communication expenses (phone, fax, e-mail, postage); bank taxes; copying and print services; office materials (paper, toner, envelopes, etc.).

Bank charges should be pre-calculated and included in the budget. The use of "miscellaneous expenses" as a budget item is unacceptable.

Cocktail parties and meals not integral to a program event are not acceptable grant expenses. An effort should be made to secure funding from other sources for food costs.

Entertainment costs (amusement, diversion, social activities, ceremonies, alcoholic beverages, cocktail parties) are not allowable expenses.

Funding Restrictions:

The funds requested under this program CANNOT fund: partisan political activity; humanitarian aid and charities or charitable activities; scientific research; fundraising campaigns; commercial projects; trade activities; projects aimed primarily at the institutional development of the organization. Please note that award funds cannot be used to purchase alcoholic beverages.

4. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov) *(NOTE: This section is required and not optional)*

Required Registrations:

Any applicant listed on the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) in the [System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#) is not eligible to apply for an assistance award in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR, 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 235), “Debarment and Suspension.” Additionally, no entity listed on the EPLS can participate in any activities under an award. All applicants are strongly encouraged to review the EPLS in SAM to ensure that no ineligible entity is included.

All organizations applying for grants (except individuals) must obtain these registrations. All are free of charge:

Unique entity identifier from Dun & Bradstreet (DUNS number)

NCAGE/CAGE code

www.SAM.gov registration

Step1: Apply for a DUNS number and an NCAGE number (these can be completed simultaneously)

DUNS application: Organizations must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet. If your organization does not have one already, you may obtain one by calling 1-866-705-5711 visiting <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>

NCAGE application: Application page

here: <https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/scage/CageList.aspx> Instructions for the NCAGE application process:

[https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/Docs/US%20Instructions%20for%20NSPA%20NCA G E.pdf](https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/Docs/US%20Instructions%20for%20NSPA%20NCA%20G%20E.pdf)

For NCAGE help from within the U.S., call 1-888-227-2423 For NCAGE help from outside the U.S., call 1-269-961-7766

E-mail NCAGE@dlis.dla.mil for any problems in getting an NCAGE code.

Step 2: After receiving the NCAGE Code, proceed to register in SAM.gov by logging onto <https://www.sam.gov>. **SAM registration must be renewed annually.**

Submission Dates and Times:

Applications can be submitted from **December 27, 2019, to March 17, 2020**

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Criteria:

Application Evaluation Criteria:

The Democracy Commission will assess the following when evaluating grant proposals:

- The project proposal demonstrates that the organization has sufficient expertise, skills, and human resources to implement the project.
- The organization demonstrates that it has a clear understanding of the underlying issue that the project is aiming to address and is able to articulate it with specificity and clarity.
- The organization has consulted relevant resources, experts, and potential partner organizations during the project's design phase.
- The organization has identified appropriate beneficiaries or target groups in a way that maximizes project outputs and outcomes and the project has a clear focus and manageable scope.
- The project's idea and approach are innovative, yet capable of being completed with the program period. Proposed project activities must be concrete, detailed, and supported by a reasonable work plan.
- The project's budget is well-organized, detailed, and reasonable. There are no budget lines labeled "miscellaneous expenses." Entertainment and alcoholic beverage expenses are not included in the budget. The budget demonstrates that the organization has devoted time to plan for and assess actual expenses associated with the project instead of providing rough estimates.
- The organization has clearly articulated how it will assess and measure its own performance throughout the project implementation phase using concrete quantitative and qualitative assessment tools.
- The project proposal describes clearly the approach that will be used to ensure maximum sustainability of the project's results after its completion.
- Past performance, including U.S. government-funded grants, indicates reliability, responsible use of resources, and an ability to follow through with project aims.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Federal Award Notices

The grant award will be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document and it will be provided to the recipient for review and signature by email. **The recipient may only start incurring program expenses beginning on the start date shown on the grant award document signed by the Grants Officer.**

If a proposal is selected for funding, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the discretion of the Department of State.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government, nor does it commit the U.S. government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the U.S. government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.

1. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Terms and Conditions: Before submitting an application, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply to this award, to ensure that they will be able to comply. These include:

2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 600, Certifications and Assurances, and the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions, all of which are available at

<https://www.statebuy.state.gov/fa/pages/home.aspx> Note the U.S Flag branding and marking requirements in the Standard Terms and Conditions.

Payment Method:

Payments will be made in general in two segments. An initial segment will be authorized to initiate the project. The applicant must provide an interim report about the use of the first segment of funds before the second segment is released.

Reporting Requirements:

Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and program reports. The award document will specify how often these reports must be submitted. All recipients must submit a formal report to the Grants Officer upon completion of the project. The report should discuss what was done, whether the project was successful from the applicant's perspective and how it might be improved in the future. Copies of video materials, CDs, and other video and audio aids generated during the implementation of the project attesting to the success of the grant activities are welcome.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact: TbilisiGrants@state.gov

H. OTHER INFORMATION

Guidelines for Budget Justification

Personnel and Fringe Benefits: Describe the wages, salaries, and benefits of temporary or permanent staff who will be working directly for the applicant on the program, and the percentage of their time that will be spent on the program.

Travel: Estimate the costs of travel and per diem for this program, for program staff, consultants or speakers, and participants/beneficiaries. If the program involves international travel, include a brief statement of justification for that travel.

Equipment: Describe any machinery, furniture, or other personal property that is required for the program, which has a useful life of more than one year (or a life longer than the duration of the program), and costs at least \$5,000 per unit.

Supplies: List and describe all the items and materials, including any computer devices, that are needed for the program. If an item costs more than \$5,000 per unit, then put it in the budget under Equipment.

Contractual: Describe goods and services that the applicant plans to acquire through a contract with a vendor. Also, describe any sub-awards to non-profit partners that will help carry out the program activities.

Other Direct Costs: Describe other costs directly associated with the program, which do not fit in the other categories. For example, shipping costs for materials and equipment or applicable taxes. All “Other” or “Miscellaneous” expenses must be itemized and explained.

Indirect Costs: These are costs that cannot be linked directly to the program activities, such as overhead costs needed to help keep the organization operating. If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, attach a copy of your latest NICRA. Organizations that have never had a NICRA may request indirect costs of 10% of the modified total direct costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68.

“Cost Sharing” refers to contributions from the organization or other entities other than the U.S. Embassy. It also includes in-kind contributions such as volunteers’ time and donated venues.

Alcoholic Beverages: Please note that award funds cannot be used for alcoholic beverages.